

THE HOPE ACADEMY

BOARD OF DIRECTORS

March 23, 2015

A meeting of the Board of Directors was held on Monday, March 23, 2015. An agenda was distributed to all present (and made a part of these minutes by reference). Directors in attendance included Hon. Charles A. Lombardi, John Kelly, David Sluter, Bianca Rodriguez, Deana Tineo, Michael Deragon and Matthew Harvey. Staff in attendance included Margaret Knowlton, Donna Dimery, and Deborah Malachowski.

Call to Order – Chairman Lombardi called the meeting to order at 8:35 a.m. and welcomed the group including one new member, Mr. Matthew Harvey and announced the appointment of a second, Mr. David Ortiz.

Consent Agenda- The Chairman asked Ms. Knowlton to explain the Extension of Kindergarten School Year Policy which had been sent to members prior to the meeting. Ms. Knowlton outlined the rationale of the policy, which will reduce apprehension, give administrators the ability to group students more effectively and assist in early identification of needs. She then noted examples of the success that other elementary schools have experienced with extended school year programs. A discussion ensued regarding the

language of the policy as well as the logistics of the program schedule.

Ms. Knowlton then briefly detailed the Family Volunteer Policy emphasizing the importance of family involvement as well as security.

The Chairman asked if there were any questions regarding the minutes of the February 12, 2015 Board meeting which were previously sent out to the Board members. Hearing none, Chairman Lombardi then asked for a motion to approve all items on the consent agenda:

- Approval of Minutes - February 12, 2015
- Approval of Extension of Kindergarten School Year Policy
- Approval of Family Volunteer Policy

A motion to approve all items in the consent agenda as presented was made by Mr. Harvey, seconded by Mr. Kelly, and unanimously approved.

Board Education-RIDE Interim Site Visit - Ms. Dimery, Head of School, reported on the upcoming April 28, 2015 RIDE Interim Site Visit. Ms. Dimery reviewed the areas of priority, standards and the purpose of the visit, including expectations of the school to provide appropriate conditions for the success of students. Ms. Dimery noted that a

protocol book from RIDE will be made available before the formal visit which will also include interviews with Board members. Mr. Sluter spoke of the importance of members being engaged in the school as well as providing a non-parent perspective and then emphasized his approval of an extended kindergarten school year program, noting how effective they are in preparing elementary school students for future success.

Head of School Report - Ms. Dimery, Head of School, reported on the development of the school website, additions to the curriculum and plans for upcoming field trips.

Superintendent Report - Ms. Knowlton, Superintendent, reported on the lottery enrollment process including the method used to determine the selection of students, noting that thirty-three (33) students have confirmed enrollment for kindergarten and there are sixteen (16) on the first grade waiting list. Ms. Knowlton then explained the sibling policy, specifically in regard to families with twins explaining that each twin is in the lottery as an individual applicant. After a brief discussion regarding other schools' sibling policies, Ms. Knowlton stated that she will make inquiries and will provide more information at the next meeting.

Ms. Knowlton then updated the group on an organized effort to introduce several legislative bills regarding Charter Schools, and specifically mayoral academies, into the State General Assembly that

would alter funding. She outlined in detail several bills that will impact financial obligations and provisions that districts would be responsible for going forward. Mr. Kelly stated that passage of some of these amendments may be likely.

Other Business - Chairman Lombardi then asked if there was any other business and there being none, moved to adjournment.

Adjournment -The Chairman asked if there were any further questions and upon there being none, thanked the group and asked for a motion to adjourn. Mr. Sluter made a motion to adjourn, seconded by Mr. Deragon, and unanimously approved and the Board adjourned at 9:55 a.m.

Respectfully submitted,

Deborah Malachowski
Secretary Pro Tem